

**Masonic
Homes of
California**

MSOS Gazette

Volume 8, Issue 4

**July, August,
September**

Special points of interest:

- Summer Memories
- Skills Workshop
- Campus Updates
- National Days
- New Digital World
- CA Opening After Covid

A Note From The Executive Director...

Dear Masonic Senior Outreach Clients, Families and Lodges:

We are pleased to share that we will be administering our 2021 MSOS Client and Lodge Satisfaction Surveys this year. Last year, we chose not to administer them, due to all of the struggles related to the pandemic. With greater normalcy in our lives, we have decided it is time to relaunch our survey. Please know that our surveys are very important to us and we are eager to hear your thoughts regarding our services. We know that this past year has been a struggle for everyone and we are pleased to have been able to resume home visits as of May. Thank you all in advance for your participation!

Additionally, we hope you enjoy this fall edition of our MSOS Gazette.

Thank you and please continue to stay safe,

Sabrina Montes

The Summer Solstice

The Summer Solstice occurred this year on Sunday, June 20th. But what exactly is a solstice? The Earth's axis is tilted 23.4 degrees relative to its orbit around the sun. This tilt is what determines our seasons, since the Northern and Southern Hemispheres get unequal amounts of sun. From March to September, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted more toward the sun, which is why days are longer during that half of the year. On two moments each year, the Earth's axis is tilted most closely to the sun. The hemisphere closest to the sun experiences its longest day, known as the Summer Solstice, while the hemisphere furthest from the sun experiences its longest night, known as the Winter Solstice. Each year, the Northern Hemisphere's Summer Solstice occurs around June 21st. This year, the Northern Hemisphere Winter Solstice will occur on Tuesday, December 21st. Wondering where the word "solstice" comes from? It is derived from the Latin words sol, which means "Sun" and stitium, which means "standing". On the summer solstice, the path of the sun stops advancing northward and appears to "stand" still in the night sky before reversing direction and going back the other way in the days following.

-Sol S., Manager of Masonic Assistance



SUMMER MEMORIES



The Vanlife Code

In our 40's, decades ago, a friend and I purchased land on Whidbey Island to build our retirement home. Whidbey Island is just north of Seattle on the Puget Sound. We were school teachers and we had our summers free. So, within a week of closing down our classrooms and posting our students' grades, we had the van packed and we loaded up the dogs and began what would be a two and a half month trip from California to Washington and back. On the island, we lived out of a trailer while we put in a garden and made improvements to the land. Each summer was a time of work, but also, relaxation and rejuvenation in what we believed was the most magical place on earth. The island was our idea of paradise—having both beaches and forests-- but also, there were summer fairs, restaurants, music and much more, if we needed a bit of excitement. When the summer began to wane in August, we began to plan to return to our professional lives. There was nothing so bittersweet as looking back at the island as we rode the ferry away from it, even as we knew we would return.

-Submitted by our Northern CA MOS Client



I met with Lou Dudley (MM, Bicentennial Daylight No. 830) at our recent home visit on a hot and sultry summer day. He was occupied by a 2000-piece National Parks jigsaw puzzle, sparking my curiosity in his travels. I soon learned that back in the day, he'd carve out time visiting National Parks with his wife, Judy and their two children, Scott and Wendy every summer. They'd pile up the trailer and depart from Red Bluff (and later, Sacramento) for 3 weeks creating heartfelt and carefree summer memories. Trip after trip, these scattered treasures became his favorite destinations to visit in America. His all-time favorite is the big, bold, Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. Known for its geysers, he recalls spectating Yellowstone's most beloved geyser, 'Old Faithful,' and being mesmerized by its plumes of water bursting in air. He remembers each spurt climbing higher than the next reaching about 200ft in air and how "magical," it was to lay eyes on this natural beauty with his loved ones. Whether one may, or may not enjoy traveling in the summer, Lou believes Yellowstone is a must-see in everyone's summer bucket list.

-Bao H., NorCal CM

Lodge Outreach 2nd Skills Workshop



When it comes to helping others, we are put in stressful situations. It was important to provide our Lodge Outreach Training Coordinators effective skills to reduce their stress. MOS hosted our second Lodge Outreach (LO) Skills Workshop on June 30th and July 13th. This was held on the virtual platform Zoom that was open to Divisions 3-9. Both nights were focused on "Managing Stress to Help Others." We partnered with Masonic Children, Youth, & Families (MCYAF). MCYAF staff Jodi Mikel and Brenda Mendoza led this workshop and guided us through effective strategies. We truly appreciate MCYAF and all who attended. We hope everyone was able to strengthen their outreach efforts from this workshop

-Camille S., Lodge & Outreach Educator

Stress Relief



Are you feeling overwhelmed and stressed with the care of your loved ones? Simon Fox has a presentation on post traumatic growth to help others heal from the Covid pandemic. This training is called “Diffusing the Time Bomb of Long Term Stress Buildup”, and it is free at www.adventuresincaring.org. What really impacted me was how to face the 5 primal threats through personal choice. To paraphrase Mr. Fox and describe the countermeasures... 1. When feeling helpless with no control, one can control the choice of having a positive attitude in which to face this feeling. 2. To countermeasure confusion and chaos, choose to create order by tidying up a bit. 3. When feeling all alone, reach out, call for help, or make a friend. 4. When feeling trapped or no decent options, choose to take breaths and make time for yourself to find relief. 5. When it seems there is no hope, choose to see the good things in life from your past or other’s pasts. Mr. Fox’s presentation is wonderfully peaceful. Look it up and watch it for free to give yourself some peace and healing from the stresses of last year. You are worth it!

-Shelly J., SoCal CM

Assisted Living Week

Grandparents’ Day of each year marks the beginning of the weeklong celebration known as National Assisted Living Week®. Started in 1995 by the National Center for Assisted Living, the week is set aside to provide recognition of the importance of the assisted living option for senior and individuals with disabilities and to celebrate residents, family members, volunteers and staff of assisted living communities. In addition, the week serves as an opportunity to educate the public about the important role assisted living plays in the long-term care arena.



Assisted living is a relatively new living option for seniors and other-abled persons. Before introduction of assisted living communities, seniors had few care choices. Living in the broader community was one option but did not always foster safety at an affordable cost. Nursing homes were another option, but did not afford much independence, privacy, or social interaction.

It was not until the mid-1970s when Dr. Keren Brown Wilson founded the assisted living movement. Dr. Wilson opened the first assisted living facility in Oregon. The model she created provided for independence, privacy, nearby friends and the safety of being able to get help when needed. That model is now standard in assisted living communities across the nation.

This year, National Assisted Living Week® will be celebrated from September 12th through September 18th. The theme for this year’s celebration is “Compassion, Community, Caring”. There are lots of ways to celebrate, including touring or visiting family or friends at an assisted living community. Take some time to learn more about assisted living and what it offers.

-Gabriela A., Northern CA MOS Manager

National Grandparents Day



In the U.S. we celebrate Grandparents Day on the first Sunday after Labor Day. This year it is September 13. Grandparents Day became a holiday 42 years ago in 1979 and the original idea came from nine-year old Russell Capper. He wrote a letter to President Nixon suggesting the idea, but he promptly received a letter back stating that it wasn't within the President's ability if congressional resolution didn't authorize him to do so. Simultaneously, senior activist Marian McQuade had been leading the senior movement for years, bringing light to the importance of revering the senior population, understanding their plight in their golden years, and encouraged youth to "adopt" a grandparent. After all her hard work, congress passed the legislation and on August 3, 1978 President Jimmy Carter signed the proclamation and the holiday was officially celebrated in 1979. Although the U.S. celebrates in September, other countries celebrate on a different day. How the day is celebrated also varies as there are no fixed traditions, but the shared goal is to honor and celebrate the "grandparent." For those grandparents who do not have someone to share this very special day, please consider volunteering at a senior center or in a senior community.

-Quynh T., SoCal MOS Manager

Covina Campus Update

As staff and residents on the Covina campus continue to follow health protocols and CDC guidelines, they are also beginning to plan some fun upcoming events that just were not possible this time last year. The activities department is hoping to have a Luau in mid-August and plan a murder mystery night with a local entertainment group. They hope to have a country fare, antique car show and casino night in September. In October hopefully a trick or treating event or parade with local school children. Masonic Outreach staff have begun working a hybrid schedule and come to campus 1 to 2 days a week while most of the care managers continue to stay home based. We are happy to have some normalcy to our work routines and be able to see co workers within our team and on campus that we have not seen in a very long time. We are forever grateful to our dedicated Masonic Homes staff in every department from nursing, dietary, facilities, and IT who continued to work diligently to keep our residents safe.

-Tara K., MOS Office Manager

Union City Campus Update

Masonic Home in Union City sits up on the hill with its beauty of nature where wild deer and wild turkeys roam about. As you walk up the road you can feel the warm breeze while enjoying the gorgeous view of the Bay. After many months, residents are starting to get back outdoors, and the staff are starting to resume coming back to campus. The home continues to follow the regulations and specify what we can do and cannot do, but the focus is the safety of the residents and staff as well. But for the Masonic Homes, there are still some restrictions and face masks are still required in most situations. Face mask wearing is not required for staff if they are alone in their office or while they are eating. Face masks are required while walking in hallways and in case there is the possibility of being with unvaccinated individuals or group. Face masks are not required for fully vaccinated residents if they are in a room with other fully vaccinated residents or staff. All residents at Masonic Home in Union City have been fully vaccinated. We all look forward to the day when we can return to normal.

-Thu V., Applications Coordinator MA

Closing The Digital Divide



One positive thing to come out of this difficult year has been the expanded use of technology among older adults. The digital divide had been shrinking each year prior to the pandemic and some studies suggest that it is all but closed now. Video conferencing has become more widely used and our staff enjoyed using this to connect with our clients while we weren't able to safely meet in person. We have seen the expansion of telehealth services from medical providers. Additionally, online grocery shopping increased about 30% among those 60 and over according to research by Morgan Stanley. We also have noticed an increase in streaming services that our clients have utilized to help fill the gap of not being able to go to a movie theatre. I believe many of these adaptations of technology will be here to stay and it is exciting to see how technology continues to enhance everyone's quality of life. If you are still feeling overwhelmed by the digital divide; please reach out to your care manager, we want to help.

-David G., SoCal CM

As The World Opens



As California reopens after more than a year of quarantine, some are excited to jump back into their pre- Covid routines, while others are feeling apprehensive and are choosing to lay low until more information is revealed.

Whichever approach you chose, it is important to stay educated about the facts of Covid -19 and its variants, and to move at a pace that is comfortable for you. California

has developed a website to keep you up-to-date on the latest Covid news: <https://covid19.ca.gov/>.

As of July 8th, 2021, the highly contagious Delta variant represented over half of all new Covid infections in the United States. Health care professionals warn that one vaccination from Moderna or Pfizer is not believed to be highly effective against the Delta variant, while two shots bring the success rate much higher. There are signs however, suggesting that the efficacy of two shots will be reduced as the Delta variant continues to spread. Please stay informed!

California has developed a new Digital COVID-19 Vaccine Record for Californians, available at myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov. This is a convenient tool for Californians, who received a COVID-19 vaccination, to access their record from the state's immunization registry systems.

-Kai H., SoCal CM

World Senior Day



World Senior Citizen's Day is celebrated on August 21st every year around the world. The holiday was first celebrated in 1991 and was created as a way to increase awareness about elder issues and to celebrate the infinite contributions of older adults to society. Originally, it was founded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 and was called "National Day of the Third Age." In his proclamation, Reagan said "For all that they have achieved throughout their lives and for all that they continue to do, we owe our gratitude and sincere greetings to our senior citizens. We can show our gratitude and appreciation better by making sure our communities are good places." Thank you for all of your contributions, seniors.

-Lizette M., Outreach & Education Manager



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MASONIC HOMES OF CALIFORNIA

Brotherly Love, Relief, Truth

Our Mission:

In keeping with the tenets of freemasonry, the Masonic Homes of California will promote the quality of life by empowering our members, their families and our communities to live well and achieve meaningful and rewarding lives.

**We're on the web
Masonichomes.org**



I have 2 underground concert tickets here, I think you will like it.



Thanks Gator!



Wow! They are good!



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ALONE
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TOGETHER

From all of us at Masonic Outreach Services, we hope you stay safe & healthy during these uncertain times.